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ABSTRACT

In this collection of essays, a wide range of issues relevant to curriculum development are explored and problem-solving suggestions are offered. The ten selections discuss the following topics: (1) deficiencies in administrators' human relations skills that may hinder democratic decision-making; (2) inservice techniques and philosophical guidelines for incorporating democratic values in the social studies curriculum and instruction, and for teaching students such values; (3) types of student experiences and abilities that curriculum development should foster, and related options in teaching technique; (4) the value of inservice teacher education, common problems that inservice should address, and creating flexible inservice programs; (5) model learning objectives, both subject- and skill-centered; (6) the uses of educational media, differentiated staffing, inductive teaching methods, appropriate depth or breadth of teaching, and teacher accountability measures, to improve learning; (7) how to avoid discipline problems by motivating students, and ways to discipline students when necessary; (8) the implications of various educational reform proposals; (9) current issues in educational administration and policy; and (10) issues to consider when evaluating curriculum and learning activities. (MCG)

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LEADERSHIP IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

(A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS)

by

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PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

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LEADERSHIP IN THE CURRICULUM

by

MARLOW EDIGER

Numerous writers in the fields of administration and supervision appear to extol the virtues of committee work to solve curricular problems. Thus, it is felt that committee members may best be able to identify problems, obtain related data, arrive at conclusions, and test the results in action within the framework of teaching-learning situations. The consequences may then indicate a need to make revisions in the previously held conclusions. There are selected questions which need consideration pertaining to group endeavors.

The Instructional Leader's Human Relations Skills

There are principals/supervisors who fare rather inadequately in relating positively to diverse personality styles of teachers. Thus, for example, an instructional leader may discuss many problems and ideas in education with a few teachers only. Other teachers feel left out and alienated. These teachers may even continually put forth much effort to interact positively with the principal or supervisor. However, the leader is not able to feel adequately relaxed to develop positive human relations even in a rather limited manner with the out group.

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There are selected questions which might be raised in situations such as these:

1. What is the role of schools of education on the college/ university level in admitting prospective administration majors in being able to work effectively with diverse types/ kinds of personalities? This question has no reference in desiring highly polished interacters; rather the Golden Rule concept is vital to emphasize.

2. How can principals/ supervisors be guided to improve behavioral patterns in terms of accepting all human beings as having worth? Once, the instructional leader is on the job, then inservice education is needed to improve human relation skills.

3. What course of action should be followed by teachers, the central office, and members of the board of education if a principal/ supervisor cannot move beyond the skills of interacting favorably with an inner circle of three to four teachers? Teachers here need to put forth much effort continually in also meeting the needs of the instructional leader.

At faculty meetings and workshops, there are principals/ supervisors who can only face directly and communicate positively with a few participants. The ideas of these participants are accepted rather freely and readily. Content presented by other teachers, upon carefully scrutiny, may even be of much

higher quality.

The instructional leader here lacks attitudes pertaining to appraising merit or quality of ideas presented. The principal/ supervisor is unable to accept the ideas of all participants for evaluation in faculty meetings and workshops. This may be true even though left out participants present content in a positive manner. Problems which need identification and related solutions sought may well include the following:

1. Can attitudes of these instructional leaders be changed? In the educational arena, one must believe that human behavior can be changed. The teacher teaches pupils in order that the latter might increasingly control his/ her environment.

The behavior of the principal/supervisor may change very slowly, but with considerable effort it can be modified. Being able to accept others and their ideas is truly the marks of a mature social being. Instructional leaders need feedback continuously pertaining to being able to work satisfactorily with teachers, parents, and pupils. No doubt one of the greatest weaknesses in instructional leaders may well pertain to being accepting of others.

2. What recourse for example should teachers have if they feel ignored by the principal/ cupervisor? At all times, however, teachers also must attempt to work positively with instructal leaders.

The principal/ supervisor may emphasize much committee

work in attempting to improve the curriculum. However, upon evaluating the quality of leadership provided in a committee of six or seven members, it is quite obvious that only two or three participants are encouraged to participate. The instructional leader is not effective in recognizing quality ideas presented by other participants. The end result of the final report of the group appears that "democracy" was in evidence; however, in reality the thinking of the few truly prevailed.

1. Should those whose ideas had been omitted in the committee mention openly to the principal/ supervisor what truly had transpired? Or, should teachers continually work, in a one way street, in attempting to communicate positively with principals and supervisors? What if the latter approach does not work, according to the observations of the involved teacher?

2. Do principals/ supervisors understand the concept of committee work? To truly have end results from a committee, there needs to be adequate input from each individual. Ideas presented need to be discussed and accepted based upon their merit. Each participant needs to feel accepted by committee members. The kind of leadership needed in schools during the 1980's involves complex skills indeed!

There are instructional leaders who desire to promote one, two, or three teachers in the school/class arena. Perhaps, these favored teachers are asked to give reports to others in

a faculty meeting. Or, when prominent visitors come to the local school building, the ingroup, in turn, is asked to greet these visitors and show involved school facilities. The principal/ supervisor may show how "excellent" the classrooms of these few teachers are when visitors arrive on the scene. On awards days at school assemblies, the same teachers generally may be asked by the instructional leader to present honors to pupils for demonstrated accomplishments. Jokes at faculty meetings may be stated by the principal/ supervisor to secure his/her key people on committees. These humorous statements are made at a sophisticated moment to determine the will of the instructional leader in obtaining desired results through committee activity.

1. How can teachers reveal to principals/ supervisors the need for a broader base of teacher participation, other than the usual few that are chosen for recognition roles?

2. Instructional leaders who reveal ability to work with just a few individuals may not be able to change quickly enough to meet needs of participants in a school. What then are just solutions to these problems? Is it possible for a principal/ supervisor, as described above, to be able to utilize the Golden Rule concept in relating to others?

In Summary

The writer has attempted to pinpoint major problems in

the human relations school arena. The problems identified pertain to instructional leaders being able to work effectively with all faculty members in a school. Too frequently, principals/ supervisors are skilled to work with a chosen few. What about the other teachers who do a good job of teaching and intrinsically also desire to be accepted as human beings having much worth? How does the lack of true acceptance by principals/ supervisors reflect upon the quality of teacher interaction with pupils in the school/class setting?

INSERVICE EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY IN THE CURRICULUM

Part One: Inservice Education

Faculty members of an elementary school should be held accountable for having an updated curriculum in terms of objectives, learning experiences, and assessment procedures in the social studies. Thus, it is necessary to have a variety of approaches in inservice education.

Workshops to Improve the Social Studies Curriculum

Each elementary school or several elementary schools may join efforts in improving the social studies curriculum through the workshop approach. Processes that need to be followed in conducting relevant workshops include the following desired criteria:

1. The theme of the social studies workshop should be decided upon cooperatively by the participants. Thus, relevant themes may include

   (a) implementing recommended trends in teaching elementary school social studies
   (b) using inquiry approaches in teaching social studies
   (c) developing teaching units and resource units
   (d) using problem solving approaches in teaching-learning situations
   (e) providing for individual differences in reading social studies content
   (f) implementing concepts pertaining to nongradedness and open space education
   (g) using team teaching in the social studies
   (h) upgrading procedures to evaluate pupil achievement
   (i) utilizing appropriate sequential learning experiences in the social studies.

2. The general session should be utilized to help participants identify relevant problems in teaching social studies. Thus, teachers may identify such relevant problems as

   (a) stimulating pupil interest in the social studies.
   (b) guiding the slow learner in achieving to his optimum
   (c) developing meaningful tasks for pupils in open space education

(d) planning objectives, learning experiences, and evaluation procedures cooperatively in a true team teaching situation
(e) coping with discipline problems in the class setting
(f) helping the disadvantaged child
(g) making teaching aids to provide for individual differences in the social studies.

3. Committees should be formed to work on problems identified in the general session. Committee membership should be voluntary, meet the needs of participants, and help individuals to solve problems in teaching social studies.

4. Individual study is necessary in providing for personal differences among participants in the workshop. Individuals may work in the direction of solving problems pertaining to

(a) selecting relevant social studies units
(b) choosing social studies textbooks and other reading materials appropriate for a given set of learners
(c) evaluating the current social studies program in terms of criteria
(d) maintaining an updated social studies curriculum.

5. Consultant services must be available at the workshop. The consultants may help workshop participants to clarify issues and problems, suggest resources for participants, and present possible solutions to problems.

6. An adequate library must be available for participants. College and university level textbooks dealing with the teaching of elementary school social studies should be available to participants for study. Elementary school social studies textbooks with accompanying teacher's manuals should also be available for study to participating members in the workshop. Recent professional journals pertaining to teaching elementary social studies should be a part of the professional library for workshop participants. Films, filmstrips, slides and tapes on the teaching of school social studies may also be beneficial for faculty members in the workshop to use in the solving of problems.

7. The number of sessions in the workshop as well as the duration of each session should be decided upon cooperatively by workshop participants. Each faculty member should donate an adequate amount of time for professional improvement, as well as have enough time available to take care of personal needs and responsibilities.

8. The physical facilities necessary in having a good workshop and the arrangement of furniture conducive to generating ideas in the solving of problems should be such that they facilitate increased achievement on the part of individuals in the workshop. The serving of refreshments and meals should be given careful consideration when workshops are being conducted. Individuals in a workshop setting should get to know each other well to that mutual trust and confidence may become an important outcome or objective of the workshop.

Faculty Meetings and the Social Studies

Faculty meetings in an elementary school can be used wisely in improving the social studies curriculum. Properly developed criteria need to be utilized in implementing concepts pertaining to improving the elementary school social studies program through the use of faculty meetings.

1. Each faculty member of an elementary school should have ample opportunities to provide input in the agenda to be used at a faculty meeting.

2. Faculty members should have numerous opportunities to serve on a committee to arrange problem areas for consideration on an agenda.

3. The agenda should be ready for faculty member study, approximately, two days before meeting.

4. Faculty members should identify relevant problems to discuss at a faculty meeting. These problem areas may include changing from the use of basal social studies texts to a more individualized approach in reading content, using management systems in the teaching of social studies, and integrating science, mathematics, as well as language arts, into the social studies curriculum.

5. Participants in a faculty meeting may volunteer to serve on a committee of their own choosing to solve relevant problems. Individual study in attempting to resolve an identified problem may also become an inherent part of the faculty meeting concept to improve the social studies curriculum.

6. Adequate resource materials should be available to help individuals in the area of problem solving. These resources may include college and university level textbooks in the teaching of elementary school social studies, professional periodical articles in this area, as well as related films, filmstrips, tapes, slides, and resource personnel.

7. Direct teaching of pupils using innovative ideas may also become an inherent part of these faculty meetings. Tape recording and video taping of lessons may provide participants needed data to improve teaching-learning situations in the social studies.

Visiting Innovative Schools

Ample opportunities should be given to faculty members to visit innovative schools. Thus, teacher, supervisors, and principals may see firsthand what is being done in other schools to improve the social studies curriculum. The following criteria should be inherent in selecting innovative schools to visit:

1. Faculty members should identify specific kinds of innovations they wish to observe, such as the nongraded school, inquiry methods of teaching, and team teaching. Ample background information pertaining to the innovation to be observed should become a part of faculty members.

2. The specifics of visiting the innovative school or schools should be determined well ahead of time such as the time of arrival at the school to be visited and how the visitation will proceed during the day.

3. Ample time should be given to discuss observations made with faculty members of the innovative school.

4. It is important to evaluate innovations observed in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

5. In the local school setting with faculty participation, a discussion may be held pertaining to what facet or facets, if any, of the observed innovation should be adopted.

Using Video Tape

Video taping teaching performance has become increasingly popular in the United States. Portable video tape machines can now be purchased which are within the budget norms of most public schools. Thus, the classroom teacher of social studies may video tape his or her own teaching and analyze the results. Advantages of utilizing video tape to improve teaching performance include the following:

1. The social studies teacher can actually see his or her physical appearance in teaching in a replay.

2. The teacher may notice if all pupils had ample opportunities to participate actively in the class setting.

3. Evidence can be obtained as to which learners dominate discussion sessions.

4. Pupils who appeared to lack interest in learning may be identified; learning activities can then be selected to obtain the interests of these pupils.

5. The teacher can notice if critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving methods were utilized adequately in teaching-learning situations.

6. More evidence can be obtained in terms of pupils attempting to disturb other learners.

7. Proper sequence in learning experiences may be evaluated more thoroughly.

8. Portable video taping may be utilized by the teacher to evaluate his or her own teaching in a nonthreatening way. Thus, the principal or supervisor does not need to observe the actual teaching situation as it occurred in the class setting or on video tape. The teacher of social studies is then utilizing self-evaluation in assessing teaching performance.

The use of video tape machines certainly can be an excellent way to assess teaching performance by those involved directly in instructing learners. The following guidelines are recommended to be used when assessing teaching

effectiveness through the use of video tapes:

1. The social studies teacher should attempt to obtain a random sampling of teaching behavior. Attempts should be made in identifying weaknesses and working in the direction of remedying these deficiencies.

2. Periodically, a principal or supervisor should assist the social studies teacher in evaluating the quality of teaching.

3. The teacher of social studies should guide pupils in utilizing inquiry approaches in learning. Thus, many responses would come from pupils pertaining to higher levels of thinking such as analyzing content, presenting hypotheses, and assessing content in terms of stated guidelines.

Using Tape Recordings to Evaluate Teaching

The use of tape and cassette recorders may be an effective way to aid in improving teaching performance. The classroom teacher may tape record his or her own teaching and analyze the results. The teacher may notice the following when listening to a replay of teaching and learning as recorded by the tape or cassette recorder:

1. Pupils are adequately praised for improved performance.
2. Learners have adequate opportunities to ask questions and make ample contributions in discussion sessions.
3. Each pupil is treated with respect in the class setting.
4. The teacher does not lecture or engage in lengthy explanations which may be meaningless to pupils.
5. Pupils are encouraged to participate in ongoing learning experiences.
6. Concise and clear directions are given by the teacher.
7. The amount of time given to pupils to reflect on information and knowledge obtained as well as to engage in obtaining information to solve problems is adequate.

Disadvantages which may be listed in using tape recorders to record teaching

performance are the following:

1. the visual facet of teaching is completely omitted.
2. There needs to be a broader dimension of evaluation of teaching other than listening to recorded voices.

Observational Visits by the Supervisor

It is important that the elementary principal or supervisor make an adequate number of observational visits to the class setting. Criteria to follow in making thses observational visits include the following:

1. It is best if teachers invite the principal or supervisor to the class setting to observe specific facets of teaching and learning such as the culmination of a social studies unit. Following the observational visit, the teacher and supervisor may wish to evaluate the quality of teaching in the class setting.
2. The supervisor may also wish to schedule observational visits with teachers. Perhaps ultimately, the supervisor may visit classrooms unannounced in an informal manner. Prior to visitng a classroom, the supervisor should become thoroughly familiar with the possible achievement levels of pupils in the class to be observed. It is always good for teachers and supervisors to have much information about each pupil in school to be used in improving the quality of instruction and supervision.

Following the observational visit, the teacher and supervisor cooperatively should discuss observations made during the observational visit. Thus, the quality of educational objectives, learning experiences, and assessment procedures could be evaluated. Specifically, the teacher and supervisor could assess (a) grouping procedures utilized, (b) balance among objectives such as understandings, skills, and attitudes, (c) sequence of learning activities, (d) providing for individual learners, (e) ways of assessing learner achievement,

(f) methods of monitoring pupil growth, (g) additional needed commercially prepared teaching materials, (h) the need to make and prepare teaching aids, (i) appropriate means to assess pupil achievement, (j) needed innovations in the public schools, and (k) new psychologies of teaching and learning such as humanistic versus S-R theory.

Team Teaching and Inservice Education

Team teaching has much to offer in terms of inservice growth for teachers. If two or more teachers cooperatively plan the objectives, learning experiences, and assessment procedures in teaching a given set of pupils, team teaching is in evidence. In team teaching the following opportunities in inservice education are available:

1. Teachers may learn from each other in planning sessions devoted to teaching a given set of learners.
2. Team members may also assess the quality of teaching done by each individual teacher in ongoing units of study.
3. A team cooperatively can assess pupil achievement and thus learn from each other as to diverse perceptions held about pupils as well as means of evaluating learner progress.
4. Members in a teaching team may share ideas pertaining to (a) arranging bulletin board displays, (b) various learning experiences available for pupils, (c) learning centers and open space education, (d) programmed materials available for teaching, (e) learning packets available for pupils, (f) pupils working on committees, (g) processes of values clarification, (h) management systems in education, and (i) behavior modification techniques.

The Professional Library

All elementary schools should have space available and subscribe to

educational periodicals pertaining to updating the social studies and other curriculum areas in the elementary school. Criteria to be utilized in selecting professional priodicals for elementary teachers may be the following:

1. The journals contain articles which would guide teachers in doing a better job of teaching in the elementary school.

2. Manuscripts in reputable professional educational journals should also contain content pertaining to philosophies of education as well as to theories of learning.

3. Teachers, principals, and supervisors should cooperatively decide which educational journals a given school should subscribe to.

4. Educational journals selected should have content which is clear to read and contain relevant content as perceived by faculty members of a given school.

The professional library for faculty members of an elementary school must contain the following facilities:

1. The professional journals are kept and clearly marked on open shelves.

2. Faculty members have easy access to these journals in the school setting or for home use.

3. Facilities for reading journal articles are comfortable and attractive for faculty members of an elementary school.

4. Participants in the professional library area have ample opportunities to discuss and evaluate innovative ideas in education.

The principal or supervisor of an elementary school should (a) introduce selected journal articles to teachers, (b) discuss innovative content with teachers, (c) encourage the use of recommended procedures in teaching and learning, (d) attempt to increase holdings in the professional library to include not only reputable journals but also textbooks and audio-visual media which may become sources of content to improve the curriculum, (e) provide ample opportunities

for teachers to engage in reading professional literature, and (f) be a leader in inspiring teachers to improve all curriculum areas in the elementary school.

Involving Lay Citizens

The aid of lay citizens can be wisely used to improve the curriculum. The following, among others, are ways to utilize lay citizens in improving the curriculum:

1. Conducting a survey to determine what parents and others would feel should go into developing an effective curriculum. Results from the survey should be evaluated in moving toward a more effective curriculum for all learners.

2. Conducting meetings involving selected lay people to determine purposes of the elementary school. Faculty members and lay citizens should be active participants at these meetings.

Micro-Teaching

Micro-teaching can give teachers valuable insight into the art and skill of teaching. Micro-teaching emphasizes standards such as the following to improve the curriculum:

1. The lessons are short that teachers would teach, approximately five to ten minutes.

2. Small numbers of pupils are utilized in teaching the short lessons.

3. The teacher tries out a new teaching skill such as initiating a lesson properly or ending a lesson in an effective manner. It is important to video tape teaching performance in these mini-lessons.

4. A nonthreatening environment is necessary to try out a new teaching skill.

5. After practicing the teaching of a specific skill, the teacher alone may assess the completed teaching-learning situation. Through the use of video tape, the involved teacher and other evaluators may give suggestions to improve

the performance of a specific teaching skill. Following the evaluation, the teacher may again practice the use of that particular teaching skill, such as initiating a lesson properly.

6. Skills that teachers could practice in micro-teaching situations include (a) beginning a lesson appropriately to obtain the interests of pupils, (b) using inquiry methods of teaching, (c) explaining content in a meaningful manner, (d) developing the art of asking stimulating questions, (e) diagnosing needs of individuals pupils, (f) helping pupils inductively and deductively perceive purpose in learning, (g) guiding individual pupils to achieve continuous progress, (h) helping pupils to identify problems, (i) ending a lesson in a manner which maintains pupils interest, (j) stimulating pupils to develop appropriate hypotheses, (k) helping learners gather data from a variety of reference sources, (l) guiding pupils in testing and assessing hypotheses, (m) assisting pupils in achieveing a desirable sequence in learning, (n) evaluating pupil progress, and (o) utilizing nonverbal communication effectively in teaching-learning situations.

Thus, micro-teaching emphasized the practicing of specific teaching skills in a nonthreatening manner. The duration of these lessons is short, lasting perhaps, five to ten minutes. The number of pupils involved in these lessons should be small, perhaps five or six involved learners. The use of video tape provides a teacher with needed feedback to improve the performance of a specific teaching skill.

In Summary

There are numerous ways available to improve the curriculum. Among these approaches are the following:

1. Utilizing the workshop concept.
2. Implementing the faculty meeting concept.
3. Visiting innovative schools.
4. Using video tape in evaluating the quality of teaching.
5. Utilizing tape and cassette recorders in ongoing learning experiences.

6. Conducting observational visits to the class setting.
7. Having a good professional library for faculty members.
8. Involving lay citizens in working toward curriculum improvement.
9. Using micro-teaching to improve the social studies curriculum.

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Part Two: Democracy in the Curriculum

Democracy as a way of life needs to be stressed as a philosophy of education in all curriculum areas. Tenets pertaining to democratic living would emphasize the following standards:

1. Pupils must develop attitudes of respect toward other human beings.
2. Each person is to be valued for his or her own uniqueness as well as for sameness of traits inherent between and among individuals.
3. Individuals, regardless of race, creed, or religion should have ample opportunities to develop to his or her own optimum.
4. Ample learning experiences must be provided whereby individuals are able to relate to each other in a positive way.
5. Democratic living is an ideal and each individual may continually move in the direction of realizing these and related objectives more fully.
6. Individuals differ from each other in degrees in terms of exhibiting democratic behavior.
7. Pupils individually and in groups must have ample opportunities to engage in identifying and attempting to solve realistic lifelike problems.
8. Learners personally and in committees must develop a set of values which give directions and meaning to life.
9. Each pupil should be guided in developing an adequate self-concept. This is necessary so that each person may exhibit responsible behavior in society.
10. Pupils individually and in groups must develop a system of values whereby problems and weaknesses in society are identified and attempts made at remedying these deficiencies.
11. A relaxed environment in the school and class setting is necessary so that pupils may be able to achieve at an optimal level in all facets of

development.

12. Ample opportunities must be provided whereby pupils may engage in decision making practices as to what to learn as well as methods and procedures to utilize in achieving these learnings.

Democracy as a way of life in the school and class setting must not be confused with the following:

1. Pupils doing as they please with little or no respect for the rights of others.
2. Little or no direction or guidance given by the teacher in teaching-learning situations.
3. Pupils alone determining objective, learning experiences, and assessment procedures in the school curriculum.
4. A highly competitive environment where selected individuals are winners while others face numerous situations involving failure.
5. The teacher alone determining what pupils are to learn in a prescribed manner and making it appear as if democratic procedures are being used in the school setting.

A different extreme to be avoided in the school and class setting pertains to the educational thinking of the autocratic teacher. The autocratic teacher behaves according to methods and procedures in teaching such as the following:

1. Selects the objectives, learning experiences, and evaluation techniques without regard for concerns and purposes of learners.
2. Believes strongly in teaching the basics only, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic.
3. Strongly emphasizes rote learning and memorization as important methods of teaching.
4. Does not stress the interests of pupils in ongoing learning experiences.
5. Has rigid rules of content for pupils to follow.

6. Expects pupils to sit quietly in neat rows during most of the school day.
7. Expects pupils to respond to teacher's questions with exact answers.
8. Does not like to raise questions which require critical and creative thinking since this wastes valuable time in learning.
9. Reprimands pupils in front of the class for minor misdeeds.
10. Feels that being strict in dealing with pupils is good teaching procedure.
11. Favors children from middle class homes more so than those that come from lower income homes.
12. Frowns at children who speak nonstandard English.
13. Feels that all pupils in a class must measure up to the desired standards of the teacher.
14. Disapproves of committee work as being too noisy and unproductive.
15. Believes strongly in failing pupils if they do not achieve well on any selected grade level.
16. Approves strongly in using textbooks and workbooks to provide most of the learning activities for pupils.

Moving Toward Democratic Schools

There is much that any school or entire school system can do to move in the direction of adopting democratic tenets in the class setting:

1. Faculty members of a school should be aided in perceiving purpose in studying democracy as a way of life in school.
2. Criteria should be developed as to the meaning of democratic living in the school setting.
3. Continuous revision of these standards is necessary as evidence warrants making these changes.
4. Objectives for pupils to achieve should be formulated based on a democratic philosophy of life.
5. Learning experiences should be provided for pupils to achieve these

desired objectives.

6. Frequent assessment should be in evidence to determine if learners have realized stated goals pertaining to democratic living in the school setting.

Learning Experiences to Achieve Objectives

The teacher must select learning activities carefully to have pupils achieve objectives pertaining to democracy as a way of life in the school setting.

1. The teacher, for example, in a unit on The Middle East might have pupils select which committee to participate in such as in (a) developing a relief map pertaining to that area of the world, (b) writing a report on developments leading to the Arab-Israeli crisis and dilemma, (c) preparing a mural on agricultural products of the Middle East, (d) planning a "newscast" on related current affairs items, (e) dramatizing a Security Councial session and debate on the Arab-Israeli dilemma, and (f) developing a panel report on issues and events that led up to the present day Middle East situation. Pupils with teacher guidance could set up appropriate criteria for learners working on committees of their own choosing. During and after committee work has been in operation, assessment procedures need to be utilized to determine if pupils have achieved objectives pertaining to democracy in the school curriculum.
2. After several learners have completed reading library books of their own choosing on the Middle East, they may in a small group discuss major ideas gained from the reading activity. Respect for the thinking of others is very important in small group activities.
3. A resource person having excellent knowledge of the Middle East area can come to the class setting. It would be excellent if the resource person has selected audio-visual aids to use in the presentation. During the

presentation, pupils may ask questions as well as present related content as possible answers to these identified problems. Pupils with teacher guidance should assess learner behavior in terms of criteria pertaining to democratic living.

4. Pupils with teacher leadership could formulate standards of conduct for pupils in the class setting. Frequent evaluation of pupil behavior in terms of these standards would be important. The standards may need modification and revision as time goes on. New standards may need to be added as well as old standards deleted. Standards of conduct developed by pupils with teacher guidance may include (a) speaking politely to others, (b) respecting the rights of others, (c) helping pupils who need help, (d) sharing materials and equipment with others, (e) recognizing one's responsibilities in a social setting, (f) helping to keep the classroom neat and tidy, (g) developing skills of good human relations, (h) tolerating deeds and acts of others, (i) accepting the feelings of others, (j) aiding the less fortunate to receive their share of the good things in life and (k) assisting the teacher in developing a good learning environment.

In Summary

It is important for the school and class setting to emphasize democratic tenets of living. Faculty members of an elementary school must continually engage in defining standards pertaining to democratic living in the school and class setting. Democracy as a way of life must be separated in definition from autocratic as well as anarchic methods of instruction in the school environment. Learning activities must be selected which will help pupils in achieving desirable objectives pertaining to democratic living. Frequent evaluation of pupil achievement in terms of having achieved objectives of democratic living must be in evidence.

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LEADERSHIP IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The instructional leader needs to guide teachers, counselors, and other school workers to improve the curriculum. Improving the school curriculum is a very broad objective to achieve. To become meaningful, the concept "improving the curriculum" must be defined in terms of specific component parts. What then are major implications in the concept "improving the curriculum" in guiding faculty members to eventually implement improved objectives, learning experiences, and appraisal techniques in the school-class setting?

Improving the Curriculum

Inherent in the concept "improving the curriculum", selected generalizations seemingly are in evidence. Thus pupils need to

1. perceive learnings gained as being relevant in school and in society.
2. have adequate background learnings sequentially related to new content obtained.
3. understand what is being learned and attach meaning to these learnings.
4. perceive purpose in studying selected content.
5. develop interest in ongoing lessons and units of study.
6. interact with different kinds of learning experiences when provision is made for diverse learning styles.
7. achieve significant understandings, skills, and attitudinal objectives with inherent balance between and among these chosen ends.
8. interact with satisfying learning activities.
9. have adequate readiness experiences to benefit from new learning

activities.

10. experience a variety of activities to provide for individual differences.

These ten generalizations may well provide a recommended framework in working toward an improved curriculum for students in the school-class setting. This could be true even if approaches, representing opposite ends on a continuum, are utilized in teaching-learning situations such as the following:

1. programmed learning versus open space education and learning centers.

2. self-contained classrooms versus team teaching.

3. flexible scheduling of diverse curriculum areas versus departmentalization.

4. the use of teacher-determined behaviorally stated objectives versus pupils with teacher guidance selecting general objectives in on-going lessons and units of study.

5. a basics or essentials in the curriculum emphasis as compered to pupils being heavily involved in choosing what to learn as well as the media of learning.

6. the use of basal texts in reading content versus individualized reading approaches in diverse curriculum areas.

7. management systems of instruction versus developing the curriculum involving input from teachers, principals, and supervisors.

8. heavy emphasis placed upon facts developed by pupils (e.g. addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts) as compared to emphasizing creative endeavors in the school and class setting (e.g. the writing of prose and poetry).

9. accountability procedures in teaching versus more open ended

methods of appraising teacher and pupil effectiveness.

10. criterion referenced supervision versus diverse approaches or methods utilized in supervising instruction.

Needed Clarifications

From the preceding discussion, it is quite obvious that further research or philosophical agreement needs to be emphasized to realize maximum group consensus in educational procedures and practices. Thus, for example, in attempting to provide relevant learnings for pupils (see criterion one pertaining to generalizations inherent in the concept "improving the curriculum" on page one), a significant question arises as to who should determine relevance in teaching-learning situations? The teacher? The pupil? Pupils with teacher guidance? Textbook writers? Programmers? Needs assessment programs?

A further example pertaining to the need for clarity in achieving more general consensus in educational thinking pertains to adequate background learnings sequentially arranged (criterion two on page one) for learners. This may also be viewed from several perspectives. Should the teacher determine these sequential learnings for pupils? Or, should the following individually or collectively be heavily involved in determining this important facet of the curriculum: the pupil, pupils with teacher direction, writers of educational materials, individuals who specialize in writing programmed materials, or preparers of management systems of instruction?

INSERVICE EDUCATION AND THE TEACHER

Inservice education of staff members in the school setting has, of course, always been important. This has been true for the following reasons:

1. teachers need continually to update their teaching skills to truly become professional individuals.

2. recommended trends in different curriculum areas continue to be subject to modification and change.

3. pupils need to be guided to achieve optimal development in all facets of development, such as intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth.

More recently, inservice education of teachers has become increasingly important due to these trends in the school arena:

1. the accountability movement.

2. dissatisfaction by the lay public in teaching the basics -- reading, writing, and arithmetic, in particular.

3. new movements in education, such as learning centers and open space education, differentiated staffing, measurable objectives, modular scheduling, computer assisted instruction, dial access information retrieval systems, and management systems of instruction.

Teachers differ from each other in terms of perceived needs in the area of inservice education. Thus, inservice needs including the following may be identified by teachers:

1. handling discipline problems.

2. providing for learners of diverse achievement levels.

3. obtaining the interests of pupils in teaching-learning situations.

4. guiding pupils in becoming proficient readers in diverse curriculum

areas.

5. stimulating pupils in developing an inward desire to learn.
6. selecting relevant objectives for pupils to achieve.
7. appraising learner achievement effectively.
8. sequencing learnings for pupils.
9. using more open-ended strategies in teaching and learning.
10. utilizing a variety of learning activities in ongoing units of study.

Providing for Individual Differences

Teachers do differ from each other in terms of what is needed to develop proficiency in the teaching profession. The "workshop" and "faculty meetings" concepts to improve instruction have, no doubt, been beneficial in many school settings in improving the curriculum. Too often, however, the needs of the group are stressed in ongoing workshops and faculty meetings to improve the curriculum. Little leeway then may have been available in these workshops and faculty meetings to provide for individual differences among teachers in terms of selecting relevant personal problems to solve in teaching-learning situations.

To provide for individual differences in the area of inservice education, teachers cooperatively with principals and supervisors may determine an approach for the former to develop professionally in an optimal manner. Thus, at the beginning of a new school year, for example, the individual teacher and an administrator may work out a plan for professional growth of the instructor.

Depending upon the needs of the classroom teacher, a flexible plan such as the following may be worked out pertaining to inservice tasks to be completed for the new school year:

1. visit a recommended class setting to observe differentiated staffing in operation.
2. read ten journal articles on alternative schools.

3. attend the state reading teachers' convention to determine recommended trends in the teaching of reading.

4. read a reputable paperback on tenets of behavior modification.

The teacher working on the above named program of inservice education may report findings gained to other professionals in the school setting. This may be done using procedures such as the following:

1. having summary statements duplicated and handed to teachers, the principal, and the supervisor.

2. presenting a report to faculty members by giving salient ideas gained.

3. talking to teachers informally about relevant innovative procedures in education.

4. inviting teachers to the class setting to notice innovative ideas being utilized in teaching-learning situations.

The teacher pursuing four previously mentioned tasks pertaining to inservice education, evidently, feels a need for

1. using the strengths of professionals in teaching-learning situations in the class setting (visiting a class setting to observe differentiated staffing in operation).

2. providing experiences for pupils which harmonize with their needs, interests, and purposes (alternative school concept).

3. helping learners develop increased proficiency in the teaching of reading (attend state convention for reading instruction).

4. being able to work more effectively with selected learners (study tenets of behavior modification).

Thus, each teacher may select the type of inservice education program that would meet the needs and purposes of involved faculty members. The role of the principal or supervisor in assisting teachers to determine the quality of inservice education desired may include the following standards:

1. clarifying with individual teachers possible areas in the school curriculum which could be strengthened.

2. discussing purposeful innovative ideas that might be implemented in the school and class setting.

3. encouraging individual teachers to view, analyze, study, and ultimately implement selected trends in the curriculum.

4. suggesting possible areas of inservice education to teachers.

5. surveying problem areas identified in the school curriculum as indicated by teachers and using the related data in the conference setting with individual instructors.

6. respecting the thinking of teachers pertaining to areas of inservice education.

In Summary

Teachers individually with supervisory assistance may determine their own areas of need in the area of inservice education. Thus, purpose is involved in fulfilling requirements in a personalized program of professional growth pertaining to improving the curriculum.

OBJECTIVES IN THE CURRICULUM

Educators, in degrees, disagree as to which objectives pupils should achieve in the curriculum. Teachers, principals, and supervisors need to study and analyze diverse objectives for ultimate use in teaching-learning situations.

The kinds of objectives chosen need to

1. provide for individual differences,
2. emphasize meaningful and understandable learnings,
3. provide for diverse interests possessed by learners in the class setting,
4. be purposeful in ongoing units of study.

Each pupil needs guidance to achieve optimally in the school curriculum.

Subject Matter Learnings in the Curriculum

There are educators advocating subject matter learnings receiving primary emphasis in the curriculum. Intellectual development of pupils may then receive major attention rather than skills and attitudinal goals. To achieve subject matter objectives, the teacher might assist pupils to achieve well utilizing reputable basal textbooks, single or multiple series. Other activities, involving the use of selected audio-visual aids, may be brought into teaching--learning situations, as needed, to provide for each pupil. Ultimately, the teacher must evaluate to notice if pupils are acquiring relevant content.

Objectives reflecting vital subject matter for pupil acquisition should

1. contain significant facts, concepts, and generalizations,
2. emphasize what is useful to learn. Inert ideas should be culled.
3. encompass recommended scope and sequence of content.
4. advocate a spiral curriculum. Thus, previously gained subject matter is met gain at a more complex level of understanding.

Learning activities to achieve objectives should also emphasize appropriate

justifiable criteria. The activities may emphasize both inductive and deductive methods of instruction. Deduction is less time consuming, as a method, compared to induction. Clear, concise explanations given by the teacher can assist pupils to learn much subject matter. For a change of pace, inductive methods should also be utilized. Thus, the teacher needs to become a proficient asker of sequential questions to guide pupils to achieve relevant subject matter. No doubt, the most significant factor in teaching is to start where each pupil presently is achieving. From then on, continual, optimal progress is an ideal for each pupil to achieve. The teacher needs to keep accurate records to notice if sequential achievement in subject matter learnings is in evidence for each learner.

To measure achievement in subject matter, the instructor might utilize teacher written tests (true-false, multiple choice, essay, matching, and completion items).

State wide and local district tests, in accountability systems, might also be utilized to determine pupil acquisition of vital facts, concepts, and generalizations.

Process Learnings in the Curriculum

There are selected educators advocating process (rather than subject matter) objectives receiving primary emphasis in the curriculum. The processes might include

1. careful observation and accurate recording of what was observed.
2. classification of content and development of generalizations.
3. making comparisons and predicting outcomes.
4. creative thinking and critical thinking.
5. identifying problems, stating hypothesis, and testing hypotheses.

6. communicating content clearly to others.

7. gathering data from a variety of reference sources.

Teachers, principals, and supervisors need to select vital processes for pupils to achieve. The processes must have transfer value. The processes may then be utilized in diverse curriculum areas, as well as in society. Sequential progress of learners needs to be in evidence in ongoing units of study. A variety of audio-visual aids, as well as reading materials, may be utilized to assist pupils to achieve process goals.

To evaluate learner achievement, the teacher needs to utilize observation methods. Thus, the teacher may evaluate if pupils, in general, are achieving process goals. Subject matter learnings are a by-product of achieved processes. An inherent assumption is if appropriate processes are in evidence, accurate subject matter learnings will also be revealed by pupils. Processes acquired by pupils are not specifically measurable. It would be ridiculous to talk about a pupil developing 80% proficiency in making careful observations or a learner recording what has been observed with 95% accuracy. However, in general, the teacher may observe if a pupil is increasing proficiency in observing and recording observations more so presently, as compared to earlier intervals of time.

In Conclusion

Should subject matter or processes be emphasized largely in teaching—learning situations? Or, is compatibility possible? Certainly, a teacher may emphasize one of the categories more than the other in ongoing units of study. However, process goals might also be stressed to guide learners to acquire relevant subject matter.

CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT

Each school needs to provide quality objectives, learning activities, and evaluation procedures to guide each learner to achieve optimally. What might faculty members in a school do to improve each curriculum area?

Use of a Variety of Media

Each pupil possesses a unique style of learning. Thus, it behooves the teacher to attempt to discover which methods of teaching will optimally benefit any given learner. The following, among others, are recognized as being positive in the field of educational methodology:

1. reading to acquire knowledge, concepts, and generalizations. Abstract content is then being emphasized in teaching and learning.

2. viewing audio-visual materials. Filmstrips, slides, films, study prints, illustrations, drawings, and transparencies may be utilized by learners to secure needed information. Semi-concrete experiences are then being emphasized in on-going lessons and units.

3. utilizing realia in achieving stated objectives in the curriculum. Students may then experience objects, models, excursions, demonstrations, and other concrete materials in teaching-learning situations.

To be sure, all learning acquired needs ultimately to become abstract in nature. Thus, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills need to be developed optimally within each learner. These four vocabularies are utilized continually in the adult world in society. They are also utilized by students in the societal arena. Each pupil then needs to experience the abstract integrated with the semi-concrete and the concrete. Respect for each student's learning style needs to be in evidence. Thus, for a pupil revealing a preference for concrete experiences in the curriculum, the teacher needs to utilize in lessons and units, an adequate number of realia. Or, a student that prefers the semi-concrete as a major method of learning needs to experience an adequate number of activities stressing visual and related auditory means. These audio-visual

activities do not directly represent reality, nor have they moved entirely in the direction of being symbolic. The talented and gifted student may prefer abstract experiences in ongoing lessons and units and, thus needs to experience numerous reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities.

Use of Differentiated Staffing

The talents and skills of each person in the school setting need to be utilized adequately in teaching and learning. Teachers, supervisors, administrators, secretaries, and teacher aids possess knowledge and skills which might be shared with students as the content and abilities relate to ongoing school and class experiences. Lay people in the community also may possess specialties which need integration with the curriculum.

In an era of knowledge explosion, it is difficult for any one teacher to possess that which represents optimal achievement in each and every learning activity provided for pupils. It behooves the faculty and staff of a school to have a listing of current specialties possessed by knowledgable individuals. These individuals may have concrete and semi-concrete materials to go along with their presentation related to a specific lesson or unit in the classroom. The resource person must be able to present content on the understanding level of learners and stimulate further interest in learning. If, for example, a resource person has much knowledge in the area of rocks and minerals, perhaps the subject matter needs to be shared with learners in an ongoing science unit containing the title of "Rocks and Minerals."

Use of Inductive Methods of Teaching

Induction, as methodology, is receiving considerable emphasis in curriculum development. To utilize inductive methods, the teacher needs to guide learners to select relevant problem areas and work in the direction of solving the identified problems. A variety of reference sources may be utilized by students to

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acquire needed subject matter to solve problems. The student then secures specific content in attempting to solve one or more problems. From the specific, then, to the general represents induction or learning by discovery methods.

The teacher needs to guide pupils to locate problems and utilize subject matter, not as an end, but as a means to an end, that is to solve problematic situations. The teacher no longer is a lecturer or explainer of content. Rather the teacher stimulates, motivates, and encourages learners to pursue the solution of problems perceived purposeful by the involved student. Intrinsically, pupils attain subject matter directly related to the solving of problems. Interest in securing subject matter provides effort needed in learning. To reward learning, extrinsic motivation is not needed such as prizes (primary reinforcers) and tokens (secondary reinforcers) which may be exchanged for a specific prize. A minimal amount of explaining at necessary intervals might well spur learners on to make needed discoveries and thus use induction as a method of teaching and learning.

Depth versus Survey Methods of Teaching and Learning

Educators, in general, recommend depth understanding be emphasized in guiding pupils to attain relevant goals. To attain each fact, concept, and generalization in depth, pupils need to experience a variety of methods, media, and experiences. Surveying any one fact, concept, and generalization might well hinder pupils from attaching meaning to that which has been learned. For adequate retention to occur, pupils individually need to understand and attach meaning to each understanding (acquisition of subject matter), skill (becoming proficient in listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities) as well as attitudinal (values, appreciations, and interests) goal. An adequate amount of time on task for each learner needs to be in evidence to emphasize achieving any one objective in a meaningful manner. Meaning theory is highly relevant to emphasize in any given learning opportunity for pupils. Each lesson and each unit must contain experiences which pupils

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individually perceive as making sense and possessing meaning.

Too frequently teachers feel compelled to cover much subject matter in order that textbooks, workbooks, and worksheets may be completed. Covering many pages or covering much ground in any curriculum area, of course, is not the answer to problems in teaching and learning. Rather, that which is understandable and becomes a part of the personal self may well be assimilated into previous learnings acquired.

Accountability in Education

Numerous educators and the lay public may advocate diverse forms of teachers being accountable in teaching-learning situations. Generally, accountability emphasizes measurable results from learners to indicate teacher proficiency in teaching. Measurable results might be obtained from the utilization of measurably stated objectives in teaching, standardized achievement tests, as well as tests developed by states individually to ascertain student progress. Measurable results may be communicated, hopefully, in a meaningful manner. There are numerous issues involved in emphasizing systems of accountability within the curriculum. These include, among others:

1. Are additional persons, other than involved teachers, also responsible for pupil progress, such as parents, administrators and supervisors, as well as governing boards of schools?
2. Do tests truly measure pupil progress accurately? Are vital, rather than trivial content being appraised?
3. Are more effective and worthwhile means available to report learner achievement to the lay public, other than test results?

Pupils need to progress optimally on an individual basis. The question arises pertaining to which goals should learners achieve and how the achievement can be reported to parents and other responsible lay persons in an understandable way.

There are selected programs of instruction which emphasize accountability, or measurable results from learners available to parents, and the larger lay public in general. Each plan uses precise ends for learner attainment. These include:

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1. Instructional management systems (IMS). Teachers and supervisors need to identify for a semester or an entire school year, measurable objectives for learners to attain in each academic area. Generally, there are a minimal number that pupils on any grade level need to achieve before being promoted to the next sequential grade level at the end of the school year. Pupils, not achieving the minimal number for a grade level within a school year, need to complete remaining ends before being promoted to the next grade level. Talented pupils, of course, need to be challenged to achieve more objectives than the minimal required for completing the requirements for any grade level.

2. Mastery learning. Teachers, prior to teaching, identify vital precise goals for pupils to achieve. The teacher then selects relevant activities to assist pupils individually to achieve the objective. If the involved pupil reveals an objective has been attained, he/she is then ready to achieve the next sequential objective. A learner who does not achieve an objective may well need a different teaching strategy until success in goal attainment is in evidence.

3. Individually Prescribed Instruction (IPI). With the utilization of IPI, measurably stated objectives are written prior to instruction. The specific ends need to be written for at least one semester and preferably for an entire school year prior to their implementation.

Each pupil is pretested on a reasonable number of the measurably stated ends. Thus, pupils need not have learning activities pertaining to those goals already attained. Rather, the teacher prescribes a learning activity based on the first new precise end to be achieved by the involved pupil. After instruction, the teacher measures if the learner has been successful in goal attainment. If so, the teacher then prescribes an experience for the learner to achieve the next sequential end. If a pupil has not achieved the aim, a new prescription is given to aid in the pupil being successful in achieving the stated measurable goal.

In Conclusion

There are innovative procedures emphasized in teaching-learning situations. Each innovation needs appraising in terms of providing for individual optimal pupil progress. Thus, pupils, individually, may attach interest, meaning, and purpose to ongoing experiences within diverse lessons and units of study.

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DISCIPLINE AND THE SCHOOL

Teachers and administrators are concerned about the quality of discipline in the school/class setting. There is fear that learners may and do get out of hand. Learning on the part of students is hindered. The quality of education then goes downhill.

Toward the other end of the continuum, discipline may be excessively strict! Students are reluctant to be active participants in ongoing experiences. Less creativity is in evidence then from students. It appears that a Golden Mean should be emphasized in discipline. Thus, an environment can be excessively permissive. Or, strictness as a concept is being emphasized rather than are students truly learning and achieving.

The Psychology Of Learning

There are selected principles of learning which need emphasis in the curriculum. Otherwise discipline problems might arise due to ineffective methods of teaching and learning being emphasized in ongoing units of study.

1. Purpose in Learning

The teacher needs to develop or maintain purpose for learning within pupils. Pupils may learn very little from ongoing learning activities if they "see" little or no purpose in what is being learned. Learners must sense a reason for learning selected facts, concepts, and generalizations. Too frequently, the classroom teacher has merely assigned a certain number of pages for pupils to read from a textbook with no readiness activities involving purpose for reading. The teacher, perhaps, merely stated the following: "read pager 110 to 113 for tomorrow and answer questions five, six, and seven at the end of the chapter." It is no wonder that many learners fail to sense purpose for reading.

If pupils are to read content from a basal reader, for example, the teacher can guide pupils in a discussion pertaining to the related pictures in the textbook. Pictures from the teacher's file could also be utilized. As these pictures are being discussed, the teacher could print the related new words on the chalkboard that pupils will be encountering in their reading. These words should be printed in neat manuscript style and their meaning discussed. Pupils can then obtain a mental image of these words from the chalkboard and utilize these learnings in recognizing new words which they will meet in print. They should also be able to recall the meanings of the new words when reading so that meaningful learning may take place. As the pictures and related new words are being discussed, pupils should ask questions and identify problem areas. Pupils can then read to find information to answer these questions or problem areas. Thus, a purpose is involved in learning than if no reasons exist for participating in a given learning activity.

2. Interest in Learning

It is important for teachers to select learning activities which capture the interests of pupils. Pupils should learn more if they are interested in a given learning activity as compared to having a lack of interest. Too often, teachers have not considered the interests of pupils when selecting appropriate learning activities. Thus, learners do not achieve to their optimum. The teacher can construct an interest inventory whereby pupils can respond in checking what is of interest to them. For example, on this interest inventory, all pupils could check their hobby or hobbies from those listed by the teacher. Space should be left for writing in their hobby or hobbies if they are not listed. Hobbies which pupils have can become a definite part of ongoing learning activities in a given unit. For example, stamps from a collection, pertaining to a unit of study on Great Britain, can become

a part of the learning activities on that country. Or, a rock collection could become a definite part of a science unit pertaining to the changing surface of the earth. On the interest inventory, some pupils may indicate positive attitudes toward listening to music of other lands. Certainly these musical recordings can be brought into selected social studies units when they relate to the nations or areas of the world being studied. Teachers need to study various interest inventories and develop an instrument which would give data on ways of capturing the interests of pupils.

Pupils, generally, will show little interest in a given learning activity which is excessively complex. For example, pupils who read well below grade level will not be interested in reading content from books which are written for the grade level they are presently in. The words, terms, and ideas being presented from these textbooks will not be on the understanding level of pupils. Thus, interest in learning will lag. Nor will talented and gifted learners generally be interested in content which is written well below their present achievement level in reading. These learners will generally be bored and feel a lack of challenge in learning activities which have excessively low standards.

Some learning activities have a tendency to capture pupils interest more as compared to other kinds of activities. Well selected films, filmstrips, pictures, slides, excursions, and records can generate much pupil interest if properly introduced. Pupils from different achievement levels in a group can generally benefit from these learning activities. They can interpret and gain content on different achievement levels.

Learning activities involving discussions can make for a lack of interest on the part of learners if the ideas being discussed contain

excessively difficult vocabulary terms which learners do not understand or if the discussion activity is carried on for too long a period of time.

3. Meaning Attached to Learning

To benefit adequately from ongoing learning activities, pupils need to understand that which is being learned. Too frequently, pupils have memorized facts, statements, and conclusions without really understanding or attaching meaning to what has been learned. Or, pupils have memorized content for a test resulting in a rapid rate of forgetting. If pupils attach meaning to what has been learned, an improved retention rate should thus result. All teachers should be highly interested in having pupils retain as much as possible of what has been learned.

For learning to be meaningful for pupils, the teacher must assess the learner in terms of his present achievement level. Thus, in initiating or introducing a unit, the teacher should develop some kind of pretest which will assist in determining present achievement levels of pupils. This could involve the use of a variety of evaluation techniques. Paper-pencil tests could be used as well as discussions. Not all evaluation, of course, should be done through the use of paper-pencil tests. Tests such as these will not adequately measure how well pupils can utilize a microscope in science or how well pupils can construct and make models related to ongoing social studies units.

Once pupils have been pretested, the teacher needs to adjust objectives in a unit of study. The objectives should then be attainable for pupils. Careful selection of learning activities or determining an appropriate instructional sequence for learners is then important. If the objectives are too difficult for pupils to realize, meaningful learnings will then not occur. Learning activities which are too difficult for pupils make for

a lack of meaningful learnings on the part of children. The teacher needs to pay careful attention to proper sequence when pupils are pursuing ongoing learning activities. The teacher may "jump" too far ahead of pupils if careful attention is not paid to proper sequence in ongoing learning activities. The other extreme in sequence could pertain to the teacher duplicating what learners already have mastered or learned in previous units of study. Thus, it is important that the teacher think in terms of good sequence when providing learning activities for pupils.

The teacher can be misled in providing for meaningful learning activities for pupils if the type of pretest utilized is not in harmony with the learner's present achievement level. For example, a first grade pupil will not reveal present achievement levels, generally, if he were asked to read and respond to complex true-false, multiple-choice, completion, or matching items. Each child must be pretested using an appropriate evaluation technique which is in harmony with child growth and development characteristics.

4. Motivating the Learner

Pupils who lack motivation will not have the necessary energy level to become actively involved and benefit fully from ongoing learning activities. The teacher must think of strategies which assist learners to achieve to their optimum due to appropriate motivation. Forcing learners to memorize a given set of facts, generally, would make for situations where learners lack motivation. In some situations, teachers want to depend upon scolding or embarrassing learners in order to "encourage" learning. Sooner or later, teachers discover that under such circumstances pupils learn to dislike learning, teachers, as well as the school as an institution. Pupils may come to the conslusion that school is an unhappy place and learning is

something to be shunned. A few teachers still feel that pupils learn only when they are forced to and that learning occurs only in situations involving drudgery. These teachers may think and feel that learning cannot be enjoyable for children and in their deeds emphasizes that "learning" can come about largely when experiences for children are made unpleasant through regurgitation of facts, rote learning, and drill.

The teacher rather needs to think of stimulating pupils so that an inward desire to learn will result. A good bulletin board developed at different intervals when units are taught can do much to assist pupils in asking questions whereby a desire exists to get data in answer to these questions. In developing these bulletin board displays, the teacher needs to think of possible questions pupils may raise pertaining to the pictures contained thereon. Can the bulletin board display help develop an inward desire to learn on the part of pupils? This question needs to be answered in the affirmative by classroom teachers. The teacher can also develop interesting learning centers pertaining to different units of study. This should assist learners in identifying important problem areas thus motivating pupils in developing an inward desire to learn. The teacher can also utilize films and filmstrips containing content which would stimulate pupil curiosity. Learning activities need to be selected carefully by teachers so that pupil motivation for learning will be at its optimum.

Methods of Disciplining Students

If effective methodology has been utilized in teaching students and discipline problems persist, which alternatives are available to the teacher and administrator?

1. Using reinforcement tactics. Reinforcement emphasizes using praise,

prizes, free time, tokens to exchange for prizes, notes of commendation, recognition in all school assemblies, badges, and certificates for improved learner performance. The teacher needs to determine the amount any student needs to learn and communicate this to involved learners, prior to any given learning opportunities. Thus, if it is reasonable for a learner to spell fifty words correctly within a given time interval, what will be the reward? Or, if a student does not disturb others within a specific interval of time, which reinforcement tactic will be utilized? Each learner needs to know what to achieve within a time interval in order to receive an award or prize. In a precise and clear manner, the teacher needs to communicate what is desired from each student in order that the latter may work in the direction of receiving positive reinforcement.

Biehler[1] wrote the following involving reinforcement theory (S-R view and the thinking of B. F. Skinner):

> The underlying philosophy of the S-R view stresses that scientists have been most successful when they have traced the causes of events and have found ways to alter behavior in predictable ways. To apply science to human behavior, therefore, Skinner argues that we must constantly analyze causes. If we can discover what makes people behave in a desirable manner, we should be able to arrange conditions to produce that kind of behavior. If we do not search for causes and attempt to arrange experiences, we will leave things to chance. In an uncontrolled situation some lucky individuals will have a favorable chain of experiences that will equip them with desirable attitudes and skills; others will suffer an unfortunate series of experiences that will lead to difficulties and grief. In a controlled situation it may be possible to arrange experiences so that almost everyone acquires desirable traits and abilities.
>
> Even if you feel a bit uncomfortable about the idea that human behavior is shaped by experiences over which the individual has incomplete control, Skinner argues that you will be a better teacher if you endorse this assumption. If you reject the proposal completely, you may not become aware of how you are influencing your pupils in undesirable ways, and you may

[1]Robert F. Biehler, Psychology Applied to Teaching. Third Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978, page 229.

> fail to arrange experiences that could benefit them. S-R theorists stress the point that what you do as a teacher-whether you acknowledge the fact or not-is going to have an impact on your students. Therefore, they recommend that you make systematic efforts to influence student behavior in efficient, consistent, and positive ways.

2. Using satiation methods. If a disruption occurs in the classroom, the teacher may in an objective manner have the involved learner demonstrate for an interval of time the disruptive behavior. The assumption here is that the student will become tired of exhibiting negative behavior. It may not be as enjoyable to perform what is negative when the student is encouraged in an open manner to do so. Generally, the pleasures of performing disruptive behavior involves doing what the teacher disapproves of.

Thus, if two students have passed notes to each other during class time, they may be encouraged to do so during an interval of time so that classmates may observe the ensuing behavior. Hopefully, the involved students will not engage in the disruptive behavior in the future, i.e. passing notes during class time. The joy of doing so may be eliminated through satiation methods. If satiation methods do not appear to work, other means of disciplining learners need to be utilized. Learners tend to exhibit those behaviors which appear to reward the personal self. There is no one proven method which works for all students in the area of discipline.

3. Using student-teacher planning. Each class of learners with teacher guidance may develop classroom standards of behavior. Each criteria needs to be appraised in terms of developing recommended standards of behavior within students. Thus, is the discussed criteria too lenient? Or, is it excessively stringent whereby harmful side effects could occur? It truly is a

problem solving situation to develop recommended standards of behavior.

After the criteria have been developed in a meaningful manner, they need implementation. If a learner breaks a rule, the class needs to discuss what the consequences of the infracture are. Should the adopted criteria not work, students with teacher guidance need to develop modified or new standards. Each standard is a hypothesis to be tested in the classroom setting. The consequences of any one standard is tested in action in the classroom setting. Only if the consequences are negative, should a criteria be revised. What is good in terms of standards is that which works in action. What is not effective produces nonworkable results. The world of experience is the real world. What exists in the experienced world is not stable nor static, but changes. With change, new problems arise. These problems need identification and related solutions sought. Solutions are tentative and subject to change, if evidence warrants.

Preston and Hermann[2] wrote:

> Group formulation of rules or standards is desirable ("only four children may be at the reference table at a time"; "committees at work-keep your voices low"; and so on). There is evidence that children even as young as kindergarten age can participate in making and helping maintain rules.
>
> Students should understand that the purpose of abiding by rules is not to please or ingratiate the teacher, but to create the kind of classroom in which learning can take place. Once the rules are made, discussed, and accepted, they should be posted and frequently referred to. The teacher should encourage the pupils to improve or add to them as the year proceeds.

4. Using modeling. The teacher may properly introduce and show a film to learners in which quality ideals in discipline are being emphasized. The

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[2]Ralph C. Preston and Wayne Herman, Jr. Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School. Fifth edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981, page 108.

content in the film should be realistic and not represent unachievable standards. Ultimately, the subject matter in the film may be discussed with involved learners. The purpose of the film is to present positive models for students to emulate. Each student models himself/herself after other admired individuals.

The teacher may also praise one or more students by name for exhibiting appropriate behaviors (reinforcement theory). The rewarded learners provide models for others to imitate. The more prestigious the model, the more likely others will attempt to emulate that ideal. Notice in either example provided above, the teacher did not force the model on learners. Rather, the model is there for observation, imitation, and emulation.

Woolfolk and Nicolich[3] wrote the following examples of modeling:

1. Model those behaviors you want your students to learn.
   EXAMPLES: Show enthusiasm for the subject you teach.
   Be willing to demonstrate the tasks you expect the students to perform.
2. Use peers as models
   EXAMPLES: In group work pair students who do well with those who are having difficulties
   Ask students to explain lessons to the class or to a small group.
3. Make sure that students see that positive behaviors lead to reinforcement for others.
   EXAMPLES: Point out the connection between positive behavior and positive consequences in stories.
   When a student is misbehaving, try to find another student near by who can be reinforced for behaving more appropriately.

In Summary

There are numerous means available to teachers and administrators to prevent or minimize discipline problems. First of all, each teacher needs

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[3]Anita E. Woolfolk and Lorraine McCune Nicolich. Educational Psychology for Teachers. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1980, page 149.

to appraise the quality of his/her teaching in terms of recommended criteria from the psychology of learning. Discipline problems, of course, might arise if the teacher is not providing for individual differences.

After individual differences have been provided for adequately and problems in student behavior are still in evidence, the teacher may try:

1. Reinforcement tactics by rewarding positive learner behavior.

2. Student-teacher planning of standards of conduct in the classroom setting.

3. Satiation methods to convince learners that negative behavior can be emphasized until the involved student becomes tired of its exhibition.

4. Modeling desired behavior using audio-visual materials or quality student behavior in the classroom.

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SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE

There is considerable criticism of public education. However, there is little agreement about how to bring to fruition desired changes in education. The writer in the balance of this paper will analyze proposed positions for change in the public schools.

The Basics in the Curriculum

Lay people and selected educators advocate the basics-reading, writing, and arithmetic be taught in the public school. The criticism implies that the above named three r's had not been emphasized previously. This certainly cannot be proven. It would be exceedingly difficult to teach without reading, writing, and arithmetic as building blocks in the curriculum.

To advocate a 3 r's curriculum only, would be very narrow indeed. There certainly are additional bodies of knowledge that learners need to experience in depth. I will mention a few. We live in an era of conflict between and among nations. The Palestinian Arabs versus Israel represents a dilemma in the land formerly called Palestine. Lebanon, prior to 1975 a generally peaceful nation, is now literally torn apart by factional groups in that nation. These opposing sides include the Shiites (Nabih Berri as leader) and the Druzes (Walid Jumblatt as leader) versus the Christian Phalange (Amin Gemarel, president of Lebanon as leader). Nations outside of Lebanon are also involved in the dispute-Israel versus Syria. In the Middle East also, Iraq versus Iran are at loggerheads, each being an oil rich nation.

The Middle East is just one region in the world that is filled with tensions, war, and oppositions, in addition to numerous other regions in the world. Thus, social studies, in addition to the 3 r's, becomes a highly significant academic area.

Also, science is a very important part of the total school curriculum. We live in a world of science. Continual improvements in air, land, and water transportation are with us. The life span and the quality of life of most human beings has increased from past years. Medical science has conquered deadly diseases in the writers own lifetime, such as infantile paralysis. This deadly and disabling disease hardly is mentioned today as a source of any dread or anxiety. Increased technology and improved procedures are being found for minimizing two still dreaded diseased (heart attacks with its coronary bipasses and cancer with chemotherapy and radiation treatments).

Additional relevant items in the world of science include pollution in its diverse forms (air, land, water, and noise), ecology and the environment, preservation of wildlife, conservation of natural resources including land erosion, automation, computer and hand held calculators, as well as nuclear weapons and power plants.

Other vital curriculum areas are music, art, and physical education. Certainly the study and appreciation of music and art adds meaning to life in the aesthetic dimension. The writer feels that it certainly may be true in degrees "without a song this day would never end." Physical education programs, among other objectives, should guide learners to develop healthy minds within healthy bodies.

It is quite obvious that a basics curriculum is too narrow in scope and does not provide apportunities adequately to love life and benefit of the fullness of life that is therein.

God and the Public Schools

Numerous fundamentalist ministers, as well as senators, representatives, and the President of the United States advocate prayer in the public schools. There are advocates of teaching creationism, as stated in the book of Genesis in the Bible. The complaint has been that God has been left out of the

public schools. Thus, public schools have difficulties with drug abuse, arson, thievery, and discipline.

The United States Supreme Court in 1963 in the court case of Schempp versus Abington Township High School (Pennsylvania) ruled Bible reading and prayer unconstitutional in the public schools.

Another issue has been the "equal access" concept whereby public school facilities could be open to religious groups when classes are not in session. Numerous lay citizens and governmental officials favor "equal access."

It appears as if the movement is very strong in attempting to bring religion back into the public schools.

It almost sounds as if God punishes the public schools if prayer, Bible study, and equal access is minimized or omitted. According to critics of the public schools, the end result has been drug abuse, discipline problems, and other evils mentioned previously. Little mention is made of the greater evils existing in society, such as murder, rape, armed robbery, and drug importation by dealers making a fortune. A public school can not be separated from what happens in society. Thus, an Immaculate environment is not possible in the school setting. Certainly, teachers and administrators must try to do the best possible to provide the best curriculum possible for each student. However, society must realize its responsibility in curbing that which is undesirable.

To what extent supporters of religion in the public schools wish to have their philosophies and beliefs stressed is not known precisely. Jerry Falwell and Greg Dixon, both ministers and from the Moral Majority, believe that God has been left out of the public schools. The end result, they believe, has been a lack of Christian ethics in the schools. The writer wonders if fundamentalists believe that God is punishing the public schools for their beliefs that the Supernatural ahs been omitted from the classroom. That makes God a vindictive being.

Fundamentalist ministers, too, are very strong in advocating the buildup of nuclear weapons and armaments in general, a no negotiation stance with the Societ Union, deployment of missiles against the major enemy, traditional patriotism mixed with Christianity, and a strong capitalistic stance in the economic arena.

The threat of war remains with us all. A super-power confrontation in its ultimate benefits no person. Building up the arms race is costly and a negative way of dealing with conflicts. The United States is a pluralistic nation of diverse religious groups and not Christian only. A heavy emphasis upon capitalism in its present form as being the correct economic system leaves many individuals out of the mainstream of society. Too much poverty can then be an end result as well as the extremely wealthy occuring vast benefits.

In the United States, parents with adequate income can send their offspring to parochial schools where religious teachings can predominate or have strong emphasis.

Humanism in the Curriculum

Humanism, as a psychology and philosophy of education, has almost been forgotten. During the early 1970's, it made great inroads into the American public schools. Students than were encouraged to work at diverse learning centers and make sequential choices as to which tasks (learning activities) to pursue. Students then had opportunities to choose the tasks to interact with. The teacher carefully plans the materials and learning activities for each learning activities for each learning center; however, the student chooses which tasks to complete sequentially and which to omit. An adequate number of learning activities then need to be in evidence so that the student may choose tasks and yet remain purposefully occupied continuously.

A complaint pertaining to humanism was that pupils may not choose the basics or 3 r's to learn. It is truly difficult to know what comprises the basics. Also, which skills students need to learn in order to truly be successful in society are complex to identify. Even presently, it is not easy to decide upon what students should learn in school in order to achieve well in society. A famous American educator recently was quoted as saying that most course work in vocational-technical education becomes absolete by the time students obtain a job after high school graduation. The writer definitely would not agree with that statement. Much can be said in favor of vocational-technical education on the secondary level to assist each student to achieve as much as possible. Students differ from each other in many ways, and a subject centered basics education does not meet the needs of numerous students. A practical education would harmonize more with the abilities, needs, and interests of vocationally oriented pupils.

Vocational Education

Vocational education is a tradition in the United States. In colonial America, as early as the 1630's, poor children were taken from homes where a trade was not taught. These children might then work as apprentices. They could learn trades, such as becoming a cooper, a wheelwright, a carpenter, or a shipbuilder. The goal was to have young people learn to support themselves and not be dependent upon the welfare of others in society.

In 1917, The Smith Hughes Act was passed into law into the United States. This law provided federal money to support vocational education in public high schools. There seemingly has always been a need in the United States to emphasize training students on the secondary level for jobs. An academic curriculum does not meet the needs and abilities of many high school students.

Educating these students along the vocational arena has its holding power for numerous secondary students. Training for skills in the world of work meets the personal needs of selected students. The business sector benefits from such education being provided for secondary students. There are definite objectives, involving understandings, skills, and attitudinal goals, that vocational education students need to achieve in career education.

The National Commission for Excellence in Education (NCEE) in 1983 advocated a strong academic curriculum be required for high school students. Thus, each pupil, according to NCEE, should be required to take four years of English, and three years each of science, mathematics, and social studies. Little was mentioned about the significance of vocational education. Basically, vocational education was omitted from the NCEE report. And yet, vocational education has a long history and tradition in the United States.

There are certain questions which need raising about the NCEE report. These include:

1. Are four years of English and three years each of social studies, and mathematics that important for <u>all</u> high school students? The academic track then becomes superior to vocational education.

2. What about the quality of these courses in the secondary curriculum? Certainly, quantity, the adding on of courses is not the only way to improve the curriculum for students. If the quality of teaching is lacking in English, social studies, science, and/or mathematics, required classes could be a disaster for numerous students. The dropout rate would then be magnified, and even greater unwarranted criticisms could be hurled at teachers in the public schools.

The NCEE report also advocated lengthening the school day to seven hours instead of the usual six, and extend the school year to 220 days. Again, the add on approach, rather than quality, is being stressed. "The more the

the school day and year is lengthened, the more a student will achieve" seems to be the emphasized slogan. Seemingly the slogan "time on task" presently being emphasized in the United States appears to mean the more time given to teaching any academic area, the higher the achievement of students will be. Many slogans have been stressed in United States history, such as "Remember the Maine," "Remember the Alamo," among others, to develop feelings of emotion among people in supporting wars. Slogans seem to abound in American education. Whether "time on task" is a slogan to generate emotional fervor or whether it truly is based on reason and/or research remains to be seen.

The writer would like to suggest the slogan, "Don't forget vocational education and its values" in the school curriculum.

Multi-cultural Education and the Curriculum

There are numerous advocates in emphasizing the significance of students studying and interacting with diverse cultures in the United States. There certainly is a weakness in multi-cultural education in the United States. Stereotypes and predjudices are in emphasis in daily newspapers, weekly newsmagazines, textbooks, and other reference sources. For example, Palestinian Arabs are generally protrayed as being violent, guerillas, innately wicked, and wanting war. The writer taught for two years on the West Bank of the Jordan River, which was formerly called Palestine, and then a part of the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan. He taught Palestinian Arab students largely. The Palestinians were indeed genial, kind, and very respectful. The writer must say in all honesty the Palestinians he experienced were quite opposite of what is portrayed in American newsmedia and textbooks. He also whitewashed homes and caves of Palestinian refugees in Bethany. Being a refugee, and there are many, many Palestinian refugees, is indeed a tragedy.Homes, lands, and property had been

lost by these refugees. Being in a refugee camp is heartbreaking and violent in and of itself. And yet, these refugees were respectful to Americans in that Holy Lord area. The writer often wondered why these Palestinians maintained poise toward the United States when human rights in all of their dimensions were violated by a nation claiming to be a champion of human rights!

Thus, it is imperative that concepts, such as "violent," "guerrilla," "terrorists," "warmongers," among other loaded concepts be evaluated by students with teacher guidance in the school curriculum. Or, would teachers have been so indoctrinated by the newsmedia that a certain group of people in society would be labeled as being inherently evil and wicked?

A quality multi-cultural education curriculum has much to recommend itself. But the key concept here is <u>quality</u> and not quantity. With more quantity in multi-cultural education, the evils of stereotyping could well increase pertaining to selected cultural groups. Each category of objectives--understandings, skills, and attitudes need emphasizing in a quality multi-cultural education curriculum.

Foreign Language Instruction

It appears that each time the United States experiences grave problems, such as in foreign policy, trade deficits with other nations, extremely unbalanced budgets in the federal government, and unemployment in relatively great numbers, education and the public schools receive their undeserved amount of blame. Could it be that industry, for example, has not conducted adequate research or used newer means of production so that trade deficits with other nations is an end result? Americans, generally, have been slow to blame the private sector for its ills. The public sector, too frequently, has received blames for inadequacies in the business world. The writer believes both the

private and public sectors have their roles. Neither is superior to the other. For example, if the private sector cannot provide an adequate number of jobs, the public sector (state and federal government) must step in to provide work for the unemployed. It is cruel and unnecessary to have unemployed individuals and then hurl insults at food stamps and welfare payments that selected persons receive. Certainly, there is work for everyone in the United States. Workers are even needed to clean parks, streets, alleys, and rural areas, which paid public employees inadequate in number, cannot accomplish.

Now getting back to complaints about public school education during times of stress. What is advocated then that students need or need more of? Foreign language instruction.

Dr. James Conant in a major study completed in 1959 advocated that American students start studying a foreign language beginning in the seventh grade and continue its study through the twelfth grade. The involved student ultimately should be able to read and discuss intelligently the front page of a foreign newspaper. Today, again it is stated the students in the United States speak a single language only. In the meantime, budget cutters have trimmed school moneys again and again until, among other things, a beginning teacher cannot make ends meet with a $12,000 annual salary letting alone paying money back if borrowed for securing a baccalaureate degree in four years. It takes money, much money, to attend college/university for four years rather than earning money in the world of work.

If foreign language instruction is truly important, then boards of education need to have finances to pay for salaried qualified instructors. Quantity of numbers in foreign language teaching is not the major factor. Rather is the foreign language teacher dedicated? Does he/she speak that language fluently? Is the teacher a stimulating teacher so that pupils have an inward desire to learn that foreign language?

Once a foreign language is taught and quality instruction is in evidence, budget cutters must refrain from acting. Rather, quality sequence in teaching that foreign language must be in evidence. Sequential years of studying diverse foreign languages should be available to students.

The National Defense Education Act of 1958

The National Defense Education Act (NDEA), no doubt, has done more for education in the United States, compared to other attempts in improving the curriculum. Present studies in American education, such as the National Commission for Excellence in Education (1983) has had much publicity. Many changes made in education have been credited to the NCEE report. The writer believes that several of the changes have actually been detrimental. For example, numerous states in the United States have some form of accountability for teachers. Accountability usually refers to measuring student achievement to determine if learning is taking place. Testing to ascertain pupil progress so often measures lower levels of cognition, such as recall of information. Higher levels of thinking such as critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving are much mor complex to evaluate. So, the higher levels of thinking are minimized. A test is only as good as the items contained therein. The slogan seems to be "test, test, and when in any doubt, test again to measure student achievement."

Along with the many tests given to pupils, teachers (not aides) are required to record the test results for principals, parents, and other responsible persons to view. In the meantime, hours literally are given by teachers to copy the results for appropriate recording. The writer wonders if a teacher's time could not be utilized much more wisely in preparing and planning for actual

teaching. If teaching was as bad as many critics stated, why will it improve the curriculum for students when teachers have much less preparation time?

The Golden Age in education, according to the writer was the passing of the NDEA act of 1958. He was a teacher and principal at that time in the Lincolnville, Kansas Elementary School. With the NDEA, much science equipment was purchased. The local district then paid for 50% of the cost and the federal government paid for the other 50%. Each plan for securing science equipment had to be approved by the state department of education. It was relatively easy to get a plan approved for purchasing the science equipment and this is the way it should be. The writer taught science to the seventh and eighth graders. There were many science experiments performed. A new set of science textbooks, based on the freshman level of high school level were purchased for the involved seventh and eight graders. The instructor and students forgot to watch their watches and the clock when science, in particular, was taught. Reading from the challenging textbook written on the understanding level of the seventh and eighth grade pupils in one class (a total of 25 students in a small school), performing experiments, using a micro-projector, adding film-strips, slides, glass slides, among other materials, was highly stimulating to students, and even more so to the instructor!

It takes money, much money, to implement a quality curriculum like that described abouve. Had it not been for the NDEA act, the science curriculum then would have involved reading and more reading only from older science textbooks which lacked challenge for these seventh and eighth graders.

Sometimes educators have written and had manuscripts published on "money was thrown to the schools" at that time meaning, in their thinking, it was wasted. The writer would disagree 100% with that line of thinking. The money spent wisely was to improve the curriculum, and in the Lincolnville, Kansas

grade school, it truly made for an outstanding science curriculum. It could have been done in no other way, but to invest money in helping each student achieve as much as possible in science. Money is an answer to problems in education.

The writer believes that many manuscripts emphasizing "money was thrown at the schools" are written to see how much attention the writers can secure and how many manuscripts are accepted for publication. The public schools need to be improved rather than seeing how many manuscripts a "leading" educator can get published.

One must remember that basically many people can imagine a utopian school, such as having:

1. perfect attendance and no one being tardy of students.
2. time on task for 100 percent perfect learning.
3. no discipline problems.
4. harmonious relations continuously with parents and the lay public.
5. scores of nintieth percentile and higher for all students from test results.
6. teachers motivated continuously and always doing outstanding work in teaching (at a salary of $12,000 a year for beginning teachers and no teacher moonlighting but being dedicated to teaching pupils unwaveringly).
7. students taking academic courses only and minimizing vocational courses.

The writer would like to compare the above listed items for a utopia in society.

1. no crime and no abuse of any individual.
2. no prisons and penal institutions.
3. unemployment at a zero percent level.
4. inflation at or near zero.
5. job fulfillment for all persons.
6. adequate income for each person to buy necessities, plus selected

luxuries also.

7. no rats, mice, cockroaches, flies, and mosquitos, among other undesirable insects.
8. comfortable homes and ideal temperature readings in the houses all year round.
9. no wars between and among nations.
10. each person continuously experiencing that which is good only.

In Closing

The public schools have done well considering the philosophy of the budget cutters in society. The societal arena needs much improving in order that individuals may live in a humane environment. Ideals and values in society will definitely be reflected within the school environment.

WHITHER PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Numerous changes indeed are occuring in the educational arena. Selected changes, no doubt, will be viewed as positive during the ensuing years. Others may well reflect the old adage--haste makes waste.

With the criticisms as well as venomous attacks on public school education by the press, the lay public, and educators themselves, a certain amount of anarchy prevails. Situations such as these provide opportunities for ambitious governors of states, state legislatures, and publish or perish professors room to have their ideas, good or bad, accepted in modifying the school curriculum.

Certainly, whatever is proposed in terms of change in the curriculum should be accepted on the basis of merit. That is easy to say but hard to implement. Seemingly each plan for modification of what exists in education has its strengths and weaknesses. Opinions abound. Politics is in motion. But, for every action, there is an opposite and equal reaction. In degrees, this certainly is true.

State Versus Local Control

All states in the union have gotten into the act of increasing requirements for public schools to adhere to. To mention just a few, the following are salient:

1. statewide testing to determine which high school students scored high enough to be awarded a diploma upon graduation. Tests also are given on selected grade levels. As pupils progress through the public school years.

2. statewide criteria to be used as printed or modified to appraise teacher effectiveness on the district school level.

3. merit pay or career ladders for teachers who demonstrate meritorious teaching.

4. competency testing for teachers prior to entering the teaching profession. Arkansas even has a law requiring experienced teachers to be tested in order to retain teaching credentials.

5. stricter certification requirements to enter the teaching profession.

6. needed higher grade point average to meet certification requirements.

The classroom teacher has very little or no input into legislated requirements to become a teacher, as well as to renew licenses as a regular member of a faculty.

Toward the other end of the continuum, there are educators who recommend more of local control in developing a system of education. There certainly can be considerable input from the local school or district in the following areas:

1. which units to teach in the different curriculum areas.
2. which order or sequence the units should follow.
3. which objectives students are to achieve in each lesson or unit.
4. which type or kind of learning opportunities to provide for pupils such as a subject centered versus an activity centered curriculum.
5. which type of organization of subject matter should be stressed, such as the separate subjects, correlated, fused, or integrated curriculum.
6. which appraisal procedures to utilize in teaching students. Evaluation procedures may include teacher observation, teacher written test items, self-evaluation by the learner, standardized tests, checklists, rating scales, and sociometric devices.
7. whether a logical or psychological curriculum should be in operation. A logical curriculum emphasizes sequentially stated objectives in teaching developed by the teacher/teachers for pupil attainment. A psychological curriculum reflects pupils within a flexible framework with teacher guidance selecting objectives and learning activites to be pursued sequentially.

Frequently, the individual classroom teacher is left out completely from making decisions that are made on the state level. Teacher representation is indeed highly minimal. There might have been five or six classroom teachers on a committee to make recommendations to state legislatures. However, the number of involved instructors is so small compared to all teachers in the state. Thus, for all practical purposes, teacher input into state laws in education is zero.

With an increased number of states having mandated some type or plan of accountability for each school district, curricular decisions are increasingly more hierarchical as compared to a gross roots levels in selecting objectives and evaluation procedures, in particular. Thus, for example, numerous school systems are emphasizing Instructional Management Systems (IMS). To implement IMS, there needs to be a committee system of organization in order to select precise objectives and means of appraisal which measure pupil achievement in terms of the stated goals. Either a pupil has/has not attained any sequential objective. IMS then advocates:

1. the utilization of behaviorally stated objectives stated in measurable terms. What is measurable is stressed in teaching situations.
2. the objectives are selected and written prior to instruction or even a year prior to their implementation. Pupil-teacher planning of the curriculum is definitely not recommended. A logical predetermined set of objectives are in evidence for pupil achievement.
3. a uniform curriculum for all pupils in a classroom. The major variable is that pupils may achieve the sequential objectives in harmony with individual abilities possessed.
4. teachers making decisions on which learning activities to provide pupils so that predetermined objectives may be achieved.
5. frequent testing to ascertain student progress. Test items must be related directly to the stated objectives.
6. tests being written at the time the behaviorally stated objectives have been agreed upon.
7. teaching being a management rather than a decision-making function. The teacher is a manager of the IMS program. The objectives and the evaluation procedures are generally determined outside the domain of the involved classroom teacher.

Career Ladder Versus Teaching Experience and Level of Achieved Education

Presently, selected states in the union are emphasizing teachers being rewarded in teaching using merit pay procedures. Each teacher may apply for receiving increments in salary due to meritorious teaching. Generally, there are four sequential levels to pass for a teacher before becoming a master

teacher. To pass the first of four hurdles, the teacher may need to pass a teaching proficiency test, receive satisfactory evaluations by a trained evaluator in actual teaching situations, and have received a master's degree in the academic area being taught. Each of the three higher levels on the career ladder will emphasize additional criteria to be met by the classroom teacher ultimately desiring to become a master teacher, such as quality test results from pupils in diverse curriculum areas.

There certainly are inherent problems involved in paying teachers additional moneys based on the career ladder plan. These include the following:

1. Are truly competent appraisers available to evaluate teaching performance?
2. Will the competent evaluator evaluate as objectively as possible or will the friendship idea predominate in the appraisal process?
3. Will the evaluator use his/her role to enforce compliant behavior on the part of teachers?
4. Is adequate money available on the state level to truly reward each teacher who passes a rung on the career ladder plan?
5. Will jealousy be involved in merit pay procedures if a teacher truly does well in teaching but is not recognized for proficiency in the classroom?

In past years and in most school districts at the present time, teachers have been paid salaries based on the single salary schedule. Thus, all baccalaureate degree beginning teachers within a school district receive the same salary regardless of being an elementary, junior high or middle school, or senior high school teacher. Or, all teachers with five years teaching experience and a master's degree in the area or areas being taught receive the same salary. These beliefs are inherent in the single salary schedule. Objectivity certainly is involved when paying teachers equitably based on the degree presently held (BSE, MS, EdS, Ph.D. or their equivalents) and the number of years of teaching which has been completed. There are questions that can be raised pertaining to paying teachers salaries based on the level of education possessed

and the number of years completed in actual teaching.

1. Do teachers with higher degrees and more years of teaching experience teach better than beginning teachers with a baccalaureate degree?
2. Should additional criteria be added to evaluate teacher effectiveness?

It certainly is not easy to determine the best method of rewarding teachers for competency in the classroom. Equally complex is attempting to ascertain who the quality teachers are that deserve extra renumeration? One thing is certain, however. Teachers are not paid adequately for their services. Public schools are certainly getting a bargain when hiring an excellent beginning teacher at $12,000.

The Role of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

NCATE is the leading organization to accredit schools of education educating teachers. Their approach has been rather flexible in accreditation standards. NCATE does not have precise standards for each teacher training institution to follow. Rather, each school of education makes a self study. The results are recorded by the involved institution and distributed to the NCATE central office. An appointed team by NCATE reads the report and makes a three day visit to the college, university campus to notice if the written standards in the self study are being followed. Also, the team of course, appraises the self study to notice if quality standards are being followed. A rather open ended approach is utilized by NCATE in setting standards and appraising schools of education to notice if quality is in evidence.

More recently, critics of NCATE have stated that standards be raised substantially and measurable results be emphasized in approving schools of education being involved in teacher education. Thus, critics would emphasize tightening up of NCATE's standards to include:

1. A definite minimum grade point average that students need to acquire prior to entering professional education courses.

2. A specific minimal grade point average a student must have before being granted a baccaluarete degree to teach in the public schools.

3. A test score of the fiftieth percentile or higher on the ACT or SAT test.

4. Results from graduate students in terms of how well they are doing in actual teaching. The results could be in the form of ratings from school administrators where the involved teacher is presently teaching.

Thus, NCATE has been asked to tighten the belt in accrediting schools of education preparing teachers in colleges and universities. Questions that may be raised pertaining to the stricter standards emphasized by selected educators include the following:

1. Should a national organization such as NCATE have uniform standards for all colleges and universities to achieve in the area of teacher education?

2. Should creativity among institutions of higher education be emphasized in that each has established innovative criteria in educating preservice and inservice education of teachers?

3. Should a single team appraise all programs of teacher education in the different colleges and universities or should diverse teams of educators evaluate the quality of teacher education programs?

The Education Commission of the States

In 1964, Dr. James Conant wrote a book entitled Shaping Education Policy. In his book, Dr. Conant recommended having a nationwide policy on education. The Carnegie Corporation and the Ford Foundation provided grants which eventually established the Education Commission of the States (ECS).

Numerous leaders in education believe that ECS has not achieved the distinction and leadership roles that were originally intended. Thus, ECS has largely provided statistical data pertaining to education in the fifty states. Rather, present day leaders in ECS believe that their organization should be in the limelight to keep educational issues in front of public school teachers

and administrators, the administration and faculty in higher education, as well as the lay public. Thus, the topic of education should not be placed on the back burner. Leadership from ECS then should provide a forum for discussing issues in education. In other words. ECS should be involved in shaping educational policy in the United States. The new president of the ECS is one who will need to possess leadership skills, be highly visible in American society, be able to communicate will with individuals and groups, as well as be persuasive in setting high priorities for education in the United States.

There certainly are questions which might be raised pertaining to ECS or any national organization in education.

1. How influential should the Education Commission of the States become?

2. Did Dr. Conant have in mind in 1964, a national organization that would move in the direction of establishing criteria by which all schools might be evaluated? If so, uniformity not diversity of standards would be in evidence.

3. Should the United States have a ministry of education in which objectives and trends would move in the direction from the ministry to the classroom level of instruction?

4. How much of diversity as compared to uniformity is desirable in American education?

Business--Education Partnerships

Numerous senators and representatives as well as selected educators are emphasizing that public schools and the business world establish a partnership relationship. In the elementary, junior and senior high school levels of instruction, the school curriculum has utilized services of the business world in the following ways:

1. students in the senior high school working at diverse businesses in terms of programs in Cooperative Education and Distributive Education courses.

2. Elementary age pupils taking excursions with teacher guidance to places in the business world which relate to the ongoing unit in the curriculum.

3. resource personnel from business speaking to pupils in the classroom on vital topics within the framework of a specific unit.

To what extent the business world should be involved in the public schools is an issue. Should the business world:

1. provide a considerable amount of revenue on a voluntary basis to the public schools. Here, the assumption is that through taxes there is inability or unwillingness to support schools financially in an adequate manner.

2. be able to extol the virtues of the free enterprise system thoroughtly in the school curriculum. Thus, a minimizing of the public sector would be in evidence. The public schools are not a part of the private sector, such as the world of corporations, small businesses, and the cottage industry approach. Public schools are dependent upon local property tax, state sales tax, and federal aid.

3. push for a strong capitalistic approach in society. Thus, government aid such as food stamps, aid to families with dependent children, and unemployment compensation might come to an end. Those who can succeed with a capitalism philosophy in society would be in one segment of society versus the unsuccessful in a different camp.

Additional Issues

There are numerous additional issues which need resolving in the American educational arena. Among others, these include the following:

1. uniform standards for certifying and licensing teachers in the United States versus an open ended approach in which each state would develop their own standards for teacher certification.

2. warranties given by colleges and universities in certifying that their product as new teachers will do well in actual teaching for the teacher training institution will retrain the unsuccessful teacher.

3. equal access in utilizing the public school's facilities during non-school hours be they secular or religious groups.

4. group prayer in the classroom as compared to a public school being neutral in the area of religion.

Issues need to be evaluated by those involved in public school education. A comprehensive solution needs to be developed pertaining to the identified problems. Each pupil in the public schools needs to be guided to achieve in an optimal manner with teacher guidance.

EVALUATING THE CURRICULUM

Faculty members need to evaluate the curriculum rather continuously. Each pupil needs to achieve optimally in the school and class setting. Which facets of the curriculum might be analyzed and modified?

Pupils, Faculty Members and the Curriculum

Stated objectives need appraisal. A problem that may arise pertains to how precise goals should be written. Should measurable or general objectives be implemented in ongoing units of study? No doubt, this is a philosophical as well as a psychological issue. With measurable goals, the teacher can determine rather precisely if pupils have/have not achieved agreed upon ends. General objectives are more open ended and leave leeway in interpretation if pupils have/have not been successful in their attainment.

Advocates of behaviorism as a psychology of learning believe that the teacher should be able to measure if a learner is achieving stated goals. In contrast, humanists advocate that pupils should select, within a flexible framework, ensuing learning activities. Thus, pupils in a class will not be achieving the same objectives. Also, humanists believe that worthwhile learnings, such as interest and purpose of pupils, cannot be measured in any rather precise manner.

Additional problems pertaining to the selection of goals for learners to achieve involve the following:

1. How much emphasis should be placed on vocational ends?
2. How relevant are mental health needs in the curriculum?
3. Should the separate subjects curriculum receive major emphasis or should increased attempts be made in correlating, fusing, and integrating of content?

4. How much emphasis should be placed upon pupils acquiring subject matter learnings, as compared to developing relevant skills and attitudes?
5. How can the community be utilized to improve curricular offerings in the school/class setting? Should school and society become more integrated rather than separate entities?

Faculty members in a school also need to appraise the quality of sequence in the curriculum. Toward one end of the continuum, the teacher may choose and sequence learning activities for pupils. Thus, the teacher decides which experience should come first, second, third, fourth, and so on, in order that pupils may achieve vital objectives. Somehwat opposite of this approach, teacher-pupil planning may be used to order experiences. There is input from pupils then in determining sequence in the curriculum. For example, teacher-pupil planning may be used to determine materials and tasks to use at learning centers in the class setting. Pupils may select sequentially which tasks to complete or omit. The teacher serves as a guide and stimulator rather than as a lecturer of subject matter content. A logical curriculum is in evidence if the teacher orders experiences sequentially for pupils. In contrast, a psychological curriculum is present if pupils individually sequence their own experiences with teacher leadership.

Additional problems needing identification and attempts made to arrive at solutions pertaining to subject matter learnings for pupils to achieve might well include the following:

1. Can essential learnings be identified that all pupils need to attain? Or, should subject matter be conceived as being tentative in relevance, subject to modification and change?

2. Do pupils retain learnings better in subject matter units as compared to experience units of study?
3. Who should direct and guide in ascertaining which subject matter learners should attain, e.g. the instructor solely, or pupils with teacher leadership?
4. How much emphasis needs to be placed upon concrete (use of actual items and objects), semi-concrete (pictures, transparencies, films, filmstrips, slides, records, and study prints), and abstract (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) experiencies in ongoing units of study?

A final problem needing adequate consideration in attempting to improve the curriculum involves evaluating of learner progress. Questions which might be raised pertaining to evaluating pupil progress, among others, include the following:

1. Should the teacher generally evaluate pupil achievement or should each pupil be guided to appraise his/her own achievement?
2. Should instructor prepared test items (true-false, multiple choice, essay, matching, and completion tests) be utilized rather frequently to measure pupil gains? Or, should the teacher observe learner products, interests, and purposes to determine each pupils progress?
3. How frequently should parents be involved in helping to appraise pupil achievement? Parent -teacher conferences may be scheduled rather frequently to report pupil progress to parents. Input from parents to improve the curriculum may also occur as a result of conducting the conferences.
4. Should standardized tests be used to appraise learner progress?

Or, should more subjective techniques of evaluation be used to notice learner interests, needs, purposes, and motivation?

In Summary

Teachers, principals, and supervisors need to evaluate the total curriculum in the school/class setting. Careful scrutiny then needs to be made of the quality of objectives, learning activities, and evaluation procedures in the school curriculum. A curriculum needs to be developed to assist each learner to achieve optimally.

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